An Apprenticeship in Resistance
May ’68 and the Power of Vincennes (Universite de Paris VIII)

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Deleuze surrounded by students

Abstract

Background: The riots in Paris ’68 marked among others, the creation of a *Centre universitaire experimental* in Vincennes of which especially the philosophy faculty became *the* testing laboratory for educational reform. There, scholars like Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Alain Badiou and Jean-François Lyotard developed new ideas on education that was most of all featured by the absence of a program.

Aims or focus of discussion: This philosophy faculty proved itself to be very creative and revolutionary, a claim not in the least place supported by the fame of the above mentioned professors more than thirty years after. Since most of its professors earned their fame while teaching at the philosophy department in Vincennes, studying the education theories they practiced might also give us some insights in how their original approach can at least partly be explained by a thorough understanding of their teaching methods. By giving special attention to the work of Lyotard and Deleuze, the two most prominent scholars residing at Vincennes, this article intends to find out what the power of Vincennes was about, and how the connection between the institute’s radical educational program and its most successful professors can be theorized.

Arguments: The educational consequences of not working with a program can be summarized in two principles: naïve philosophy and of teaching the manifold, which we can roughly translate as an interest in philosophy not biased on the existing history of philosophy and all its interpretations, and by a non-linear and anti-hierarchical way of creating arguments. The goal in this article is to find out in what way these two principles compose a new type of teaching: what are its consequences for the texts to be discussed, what are its consequences for the students and, finally, what is the role of the teacher.

Conclusion: The faculty of philosophy in Vincennes created a new way of teaching but also a new way of doing research. But although the theories of its scholars are nowadays fully incorporated in our teaching, their thoughts on how they should be taught are missing. In fact, the past thirty years of educational renewals seem to prevail against the much more rigid and hierarchic structures that people like Deleuze and Lyotard fought about. Even in Vincennes itself, a new *Centre universitaire experimental* is therefore desperately needed.

*Keywords***:** Education, creativity, Deleuze

學習抗拒：

1968 年法國的學生暴動和凡聖 [巴黎第八] 大學的影响力

摘要

背景： 在 1968 年巴黎的暴亂事件，引發在凡聖創立一所實驗性的大學，其中特別是哲學系成爲教育改革測試的實驗室，那裡的學者如 Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Alain Badiou 和 Fran1cois Lyotard 等發展了一些新的教育理念，最重要的特色是沒有既定的課程。

目的或討論焦點：這哲學系證明其本身非常富創意和革命性，上段所述的教授們在過往超過三十年的名望，擁護著其所聲稱的素求。他們贏得的名望，大多是在凡聖的哲學系任教時建立起來，探究他們實踐的教育理念，也許能給予我們一些線索去明白他們原來的思想進路，詳盡解釋他們的教學方法。這篇文章特別留意 Lyotard 和 Deleuze 二位在凡聖大學最著名宿儒的工作，試圖發現什麼是凡聖的影响力，推斷學院激進的課程和其最成功的教授之間的關係。

論點/評論/建議： 沒有既定課程的教育後果可被總結爲二項原則: 純樸的哲學和多樣化的教學，大概可理解爲對哲學的興趣沒有被傳統化的哲學及其解釋所規範，並且依循一個非線性和反建制的方式去構思論據。這篇文章目的是要找出怎樣用這兩項原則去組成一種新的教學模式：對施教內容和學生的影响、教師應扮演甚麼角式？

總結：凡聖的哲學系不單創下了新的教學方向，也締造了新的研究路線。雖然其學者的理論現今已完全收歸在我們的教學中，但卻遺失了關於他們原先尋找應該怎樣去教的心路歷程。實際上, 過去三十年的教育更新盛行更加嚴密和層次分明的結構，而這正是 Deleuze 和 Lyotard 所拒抗的，就算是在現今的凡聖，也急需創立另一所新的實驗性大學。

關鍵詞：教育、創意、Deleuze

Introduction: l'Université des Marginaux

As a reaction to the student revolts of May 1968, it was decided that Paris should have a new university in which a new type of teaching was propagated; a radical and very liberal educational institute where Marxist thought was experimented with and where not the professors and the hierarchy that accompanied the traditional academic system was central to its functioning, but the ideas. In a very short period, especially for academic standards, the *Centre universitaire experimental* opened its doors in Vincennes already in December 1968, and the students followed only a month later. The center soon became the *Université de Vincennes Paris VIII*, and immediately got a lot of attention. Lacan gave his seminars there, Naom Chomsky spent a long time in Vincennes, Julia Kristeva and Frank Popper taught there and Slavoj Žižek, one of today's key figures in philosophy, studied here. The most radical department was its department of philosophy where, under supervision of Michel Foucault, an extraordinary strong and influential group of professors got together, producing a most progressive teaching program, taking the lessons of may '68 more than serious.

The French academic establishment, better known as Paris- has never been very happy with this critical institute that was forced upon them by the student's rebellions but not in the least place by the rather panic reactions of the French government. Vincennes, literally located at the margins of Paris, was also figuratively considered the place where the margineaux and the fouls dominated. This reputation was fed by the fact that Vincennes, especially in its early years, had some growing pains in developing the Marxist or anarchist curriculum that –of course following May '68- was supposed to be offered here. Infamous are most of all the scandals around Judith Miller, daughter of the famous psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, who, as a consequence of her not very law-abiding activities (she was accused of awarding students high grades without an exam), was subsequently fired by the Ministry of Education, upon which she reacted in a radio-interview by arguing that the University was a capitalist institute, and that she considered it her goal to make it function as badly as possible. One needs little imagination to understand that the dominant academic skepticism did not weaken when hearing these sorts of intensions.

Nevertheless, the educational revolutions that were experimented with in Vincennes need more serious attention. If only because the first generation of philosophers that taught and was taught at Vincennes are now seen as the most influential and radical thinkers of the 20th century. Not Judith Miller but Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard, François Châtelet, Hélène Cixous, Alain Badiou, and Gilles Deleuze are the names to be remembered, because they only seem to grow more important within philosophy and within the humanities today. Châtelet Cixous are internationally not (yet) considered to be very influential thinkers (in France they are), but Foucault, Lyotard, Deleuze and today also Badiou, are included in every course on contemporary continental philosophy and in many of the theoretical courses given throughout the humanities departments in the world. It should be mentioned that except Foucault –who lead the department from quite a distance and was never too much involved in what happened in Vincennes- the other professors earned their fame not before they joined Vincennes. This allows me to launch the thought that the new ideas on education as practiced in Vincennes not only allowed the professors to give good

education to their students, but also to themselves.

What happened in the beginning of the seventies in Vincennes is thus very interesting; it doesn't happen very often that a faculty is given so much freedom when it comes to the educational methods, it doesn't happen very often that so many members of staff are recognized as key figures in their field and when these two incidents happen together, closer inspection is required. If only because the educational praxis of today, in some aspects more and more resembles what the students in '68 fought against. The growth of academia, especially in terms of student numbers paired with an efficiency strike that was not always beneficiary for the position of the individual student, or better even, for the central role that the exchange and the development of ideas should have. And the ironic thing is the capitalist treadmill that has captured academia today more than ever, these very same students are being taught about *Deleuze's Corps sans Organes* (Body without Organs), the Artaudian concept that Deleuze used in order to search for an absolute freedom, a situation free of any organization whatsoever. It is an irony that makes us laugh sourly; to see that these radical philosophers from Vincennes who play such an important role in an educational system that is even much more rigid and regulated than the system they fought against.

The act of resistance

Not just as a historical inquiry in how the philosophers of Vincennes were formed by their didactical experiments, but also as a counterweight to the current ideology of academic education, I propose to take a close look at the way in which teaching in Vincennes was able to stimulate both the professors and the students. As indicated before, the new approach in Vincennes originated from a radical Marxism, so we should pay attention to that. For although the ideas of the abovementioned Miller were –of course- not very much appreciated inside the university either, they nevertheless show how fundamental these scholars were rethinking the power relations between the student and the teacher, and how efforts were taken to create an educational system conforming the ideas of Marx. For although Miller had few allies in her attempts to make the corrupt university system function as bad as possible (to use her own words), the rest of the staff certainly agreed with her that the university had indeed become an instrument of capitalism. In his *La condition postmoderne* for instance, Jean-François Lyotard argues several times that education in our age has turned from a universal welfare right under a social democracy into an important part of the economy and one of the most important enterprises of the post-industrial economy of the future. With these much more subtle arguments, Lyotard (already in 1979) shows an almost prophetic vision on what has happened to education over the last decades (certainly after '89 academia more and more functioned as a part of neo-liberal capitalism), yet it implicitly tells us in what way Vincennes wanted to be different. Education should not be subordinate to the powers of the professors, not to the principles of the market, and actually not to any principle whatever. Education, Lyotard argued, is an apprenticeship in resistance (Lyotard and Van Abbeele, 1984, p. 18); it is about attacking and questioning every form of power, structure and authority. Resistance is a fundamental necessity for any creative thinking to take place.

Now the idea that any kind of authority needs to be questioned, is not very new one. It was already in the beginning of the 1960s (especially in Great-Britain, think of authors like Herbert Read) that this idea got incorporated in education. This Anglo-Saxon educational revolution has,

especially since 1968, very influential throughout the world, and has had a remaining effect on educational thought. For indeed, the student of today is not placed fully under the authority of the professor, but is (in a limited way) allowed to choose his own optional subject, his major and his minor, and whatever other choice he is allowed to make. In line with that, most universities today greatly value discussions where the teacher is no longer the one who controls a classroom, but more like a primus inter pares; the teacher does not so much tell the students what is true, good and beautiful, but is the one who leads the discussions into the directions he considers of importance. The teacher is not the one who conveys knowledge, but has become the herdsman, to use a – not coincidently- Christian image, leading his flock to the right forms of knowledge.

But what Lyotard was interested in, and what in the end was realized at Vincennes, is something very different. Discussions, for instance, never formed an important part of education over there. On the contrary, both Deleuze and Badiou repeatedly stated that philosophical discussions will lead us nowhere. Philosophy is not polemic, but a consequent thinking about images of the world, the creation of webs of concepts that are in a rigid or supple relation to one another, a relation that can only be disturbed by a discussion. This does however not mean that should stay quiet. On the contrary, they are invited to contribute to the analysis, though they should keep in mind contributing means to think with the text, to think with the argument being made. The teacher, not on the basis of hierarchy but on his ability to explore these texts, is then the one being regarded most capable of mapping the arguments and the connections they have to the everyday life.

The increased freedom of the student in terms of choosing the courses of his like has nevertheless become very much a part of teaching at the philosophy section in Vincennes. It is even much more radical than anywhere else. The rejection of any kind of hierarchy in the program, to rephrase it in post-68 terms, has been so consequently practiced in Vincennes that the whole idea of ‘building up knowledge’ was put aside. After all, this is how radically we should read what Lyotard said before. For if he claims that education is an apprenticeship in resistance, this also means a “… resistance against the academic genres of discourse to the extend that they forbid the reception of the “… is it happening that?”, against the great narratives themselves, against the way thought itself is treated by the new post-modern technologies insofar as they express the most recent application of capitalist rules to language, resistance against every object of thought which is given to be grasped though some “obvious” delimitation, method or end” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 18)

Parallel to the development of this thought, a new educational philosophy is being developed in Vincennes which seems perfectly in line with these ideas. For, and we should be very clear about that, it is not only Lyotard who discusses issues of power in such a way. He isn’t even to be regarded the spokesman of the institute. A well thought through apprenticeship in resistance, as Lyotard proposes it, also comes back with Badiou, when he, in his ethics, claims that an ethics is an ongoing and performative fencing of Evil. Similarly, Deleuze -in making reference to Artaud- sees an ethics in the idea of the ‘body without organs’, which stands for any kind of multiplicity or life that does not follow structure, or at least finds itself suspicious of any kind of organization). And thus, the philosophy department in Vincennes has not

organized its ‘body of courses’ in any way: not according to capital, not to the state or any other meta-structure, not even to philosophy itself, which meant that it had no introductory courses, methodological courses or any other type of course that somehow continues other courses. Instead, a multiplicity of courses were offered that were open to everyone. Courses were offered that could stand on their own two feet, and everyone was allowed to pick whatever course they considered to be of importance for them.

In order to discuss the radical nature of the new educational theories at Vincennes and the consequences this had on the success of the professors in its early years from a more thorough perspective, the coming paragraphs will focus mainly on how Gilles Deleuze, teaching at Vincennes from 1970 until his retirement in 1987, spoke about the classroom revolutions at this institute and how they were a part of his own teaching. Both Lyotard and Badiou will also be consulted, but the focus will be more on Deleuze because he, unlike Lyotard and Badiou, taught at this institute for seventeen years in a row (as was indicated above) and because the courses he gave are today written down and put on the internet (by friends, former students and scholars and by the current staff at Vincennes) which means for us that besides reading in his published work on how he gives us some insight on what his intentions are in respect to teaching, we can now also see ‘for real’, what this meant for the composition of the argument in his actual teaching. Only then, when we can find why and how education at Vincennes was so much an inspiration to those teaching and those being taught there. Only this way we can study in what way the Marxist or anarchist point of view can be given form. For truly Marxist education does not only mean setting up of a body of courses that is not organized by programs (to use the Artaudian image of the corps sans organs once more), it should also be articulated within each class. Also we can ask ourselves what Marxism means for the way in which arguments should be approached, and the way in which students –that are not part of a rigidly structured program- have to be approached.

Naive philosophy

The first important consequence of not accommodating a course within a program-and this we could already have read in the critiques of both Miller and Lyotard- is that the one who teaches gets the opportunity to read the subject in its most original form. In terms of philosophy this means that a particular philosopher is not automatically placed into the frames commonly used in the introductions, continued introductions and in the other meta-structures that implicitly or explicitly over quote the ideas of the scholar discussed. This naïve way of thinking, as Deleuze calls it (naïve in the sense that the material is studied regardless of the way it has been studied before and of the structures and interpretations that history has placed upon it), gives the teachers (and the students) an enormous freedom in how to read and interpret a particular argument. To take an example: there are still very few courses given in which the idea of God with Spinoza does not follow the idea of God with Descartes or other early rationalist/empiricist thinkers (like Berkeley). Close reading of what Spinoza has to say and especially on the way he conceptualized his idea of God, independent of the way other thinkers have articulated God or ideas considered close to it, might nevertheless give us a very different (and original) conception of what Spinoza was actually after. Naïve thinking therefore has the great advantage that the philosophers discussed are not passively but actively read, which leads to the fact that the hierarchies and the relations that are always supposed within a particular

canon, are being attacked and questioned.

But the idea of starting education only with the text itself is of course not the whole issue. On the contrary, once started, the text functions as a point of departure from which all kinds of connections are being constructed. Not according to the dogmas of the history of philosophy, but according to what comes closest to the text itself. In the classes of Gilles Deleuze, also when he talks of something like Spinoza's idea of God, this history of philosophy in general or at least the various schools according to which it is structured, are being questioned. For since Vincennes did not ask him to read Spinoza according to "Early Modern Rationalism", or "17th century proofs of the existence of God" or "Jewish thinkers", Deleuze found the freedom to creatively rethink the entire philosophy of Spinoza. And thus he connects Spinoza to the plastic arts (El Greco) and shows in what way one can start from a definition of God and yet create a most liberal and radical piece of work. Of course, other philosophers and theologians have often used the concept of God in order to create some kind of restriction. But close reading shows that that is not what Spinoza does. And actually it helps tremendously to see that others like El Greco, have also used the divine in order to come to an absolute creative freedom. In line with this, Deleuze also discusses the Old Testament and the way in which Leibniz starts his new philosophy with a notion of God as found there. Of course in order to show us that Spinoza's Ethics, without a doubt the most liberal work in the early modern days, can be understood much better when placed next to these other forms of religiosity. This then makes us question the age old argument that Spinoza started his Ethics with a part on God only because he did not want to start his magnum opus too radically. On the contrary, we can now say: starting with God was a necessary point of departure in order to work towards his most liberal ideas.

Of course Deleuze says more than this. The most original part of the argument is probably that the function of religion in the early modern days should not always be seen as repressive but can easily be seen as a 'liberating' or delivering idea (later he claims that also Mallebranche and even Descartes seem to be at least interested in this idea). Next to that, and this is more important for where we are heading to, Deleuze shows us what these naïve points of departure of Vincennes, can bring us to, especially concerning the history of philosophy. For in contrast to his colleagues in Paris (professors like Jean Hyppolite at Sorbonne), this exercise in thought does not tell us the history of philosophy, but writes one. Deleuze does philosophy.

Similarly, the writings of Lyotard reveal s strong discontent with the way in which history in general and the history of philosophy in particular made use of periods (see for instance his chapter three on rewriting modernity in *L' inhumain* in which he specifically talks of the time adjuncts that underpin these thoughts (Lyotard, 1988)) and the dramatic consequences this rigid timing has for thinking. Deleuze criticizes not so much the impossibility of a philosophical canon, like Lyotard, but much more questions the mutilations caused by these attempts to structure philosophy. In many occasions Deleuze stressed his problematic relation with 'the History of Philosophy' (with capitals), which he felt he had to deal with first when he started writing monographs at the start of his career.[1] The violations to thought and the limitations to creative thinking that

[1] His thorough analyses on the history of philosophy were actually an important reason for Foucault to nominate him for a professorship at Vincennes in 1970.

follow from formulating and conserving such a canon (which takes place in every retrospective History of Philosophy book, but also when a curriculum or even a course is lead by such historical and sociological principles of organization), was such a horror to Deleuze that he referred to it several times as an immaculate conception or an "ass-fuck philosophy"; it systematically aimed at approaching the philosopher in question from an impossible or wrong way, giving him a child that was monstrous yet still his.

Although different roads are taken, Lyotard and Deleuze thus both conclude that abandoning the structures or at least questioning them in such a way that the logic they presume not necessarily pollutes philosophy, was a necessary purification not only of philosophy, but to thinking in general. It was the consequence of May 68, when a call for a new philosophy, a new way of thinking in which –and I have to use their Marxist terminology again- at least a striving for a classless society was incorporated. Getting rid of hierarchy altogether was necessary in order to teach the philosophy students philosophy again and not the "history of the red line", as this was laid down by others than the philosophers themselves (the only exception being perhaps Bertrand Russell). Not only the courses as given at Vincennes support these claims, but also the books and the articles published by the professors teaching there, perform a naïve exploration of the history of philosophy. For although contemporary post-structuralist (or post-modern, as it is sometimes called) (French) philosophy[2], especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, has a name for writing only very personal obscure and experimental, these marginaux from Vincennes, ironically enough, most of all produce (especially in the early years) solid and high quality monographs on philosophers that, according to their naïve and thus original reading, are not well or wrongly understood in the history of philosophy. And that is why these books on Kant, Spinoza, Bergson, Heidegger and Nietzsche are still so well read today: their naïve and thorough explications created matchless writings that still occupy a unique place in philosophy.

Teaching the manifold

The second big advantage of not fitting courses into a program is that knowledge is not 'built up', an idea that should be considered just as questionable as the canon which we discussed before. Most of all because it presumes the same temporal impossibility, according to Lyotard, as it once again makes use of a timing which moves away from the 'now'. Thinking from Deleuze's arguments, big question marks can be placed with the consequences the entrance requirements that follow from this idea, have on the courses give. Throughout his texts and his courses, the idea is launched that, as with the canon, the pedagogy of building up knowledge hangs together all courses given in such a way that originality and creativity are radically restricted according to the themes that over code the curriculum.

The seminars given at Vincennes were –as mentioned before- not aimed at students of a particular year, yet were offered to all students. And they went even further. Talking of the freedom of the Vincennes educational system, Deleuze praises in one of his books the diversity of the philosophy department:

> "… there were the same courses for first-year and nth-year students, for students and non-students, philosophers and non-philosophers, young and old, and many different

[2] Elsewhere I discussed the usefulness or better the uselessness of the concepts post-modernism and post-structuralism in respect to the work of Deleuze in great detail (Dolphijn 2004)

> nationalities. There were always young painters and musicians there, filmmakers, architects, who showed great rigor in their thinking. (1995, p. 139)"

The consequence of abandoning the idea of programs, Deleuze adds following this quote, was that the students did attend all classes offered, but much more (actively) searched for the courses they considered inspiring, even if this was far removed from their main interest. And thus a class consisted of an ever changing yet eager group of individuals with very different backgrounds and a desire to think in many different directions. A group at Vincennes was never a unity but a dynamic multiplicity that was indeed very knowledgeable or intelligent but not based on a 'shared' intelligence.

For the composition of the course this means that a linear build up is out of the question; there is nothing to be continued, there are no end terms to a course which have to be met nor are there requirements to enter the next one. A class took place in the 'now' as Lyotard calls it: it had to be an introduction, a continued introduction and a methodological course all at the same time. And it also had to include a (re)reading of the history of philosophy. This was of course not achieved by bringing different layers into a course which would then lead to an new kind of hierarchy (from 'easy' to 'difficult') but by telling a multiplicity of stories, and creating, in order to open them up, a multiplicity of entrances. A course needs to strive for a manifold structure, to introduce a Deleuzian neologism (taken from the differential geometry of Gauss and Riemann).

The concept of the fold, which lead me to this term manifold, was introduced by Deleuze in his book Foucault and further developed in *The Fold, Leibniz and the Baroque* (though already he already made use of it in his classes in 1980). It is not a concept that Deleuze connects to education, but it definitely performs a strong connection to the didactical ideals of Vincennes. Especially the way in which Deleuze starts his classes are interesting in this perspective. For although he is often considered to be a most difficult philosopher, his classes start out very plain, or rather, unfolded, to make use of the introduced terminology correctly. One cannot presuppose that when a text or a concept of Spinoza will be the topic of today's class, every student all these students know what Spinoza has written, or how he seem himself in relations to his likeminded philosophers. We cannot and should not presuppose this kind of knowledge if we want to start thinking as really naïve philosophers. Let us once more analyze a class from Deleuze, this time in order to find out in what way the unfolded and manifold articulate themselves. We start at a beginning:

"It matters little whether you've read him or not, for I'm telling a story. I begin with some terminological cautions. In Spinoza's principal book, which is called the Ethics and which is written in Latin, one finds two words: AFFECTIO and AFFECTUS. Some translators, quite strangely, translate both in the same way. This is a disaster. They translate terms, affectio and affectus, by "affection." I call this a disaster because when a philosopher employs two words, it's because in principle he has reason to…" (24th of January 1978)

What happens in these few sentences is hard to summarize as so many things are happening at the same time. But let us try to follow a few of the lines being set out. What immediately becomes clear is that specific knowledge about the history of philosophy is not required: Deleuze does not ask of the students that they know who Spinoza is, that his most important work is called the Ethics and that it was written in Latin. Yet after its unfolded start we see

that it only takes him several sentences to come to a very challenging contradiction which will in the end be the most original part of his argument, namely, the difference between affection and affectus with Spinoza, a most complex difference which, as Deleuze himself already notes, had escaped the attention of most Spinoza scholars. And that only in a few sentences, as could have been expected, the analysis of these two concepts is being explored in great detail in the rest of this course (we are now only half a minute in class), but this deep analysis does not go without also trying to challenge the less educated student. By giving examples for instance, by showing in what way Spinoza positions himself in relation to scholastics and the philosophical problematic of the 17th century, but also by connecting affection-affectus to other important concepts in the work of Spinoza.

The experienced reader will be challenged by the far reaching consequences of the difference between affectus and affection that has been set out in the beginning of the class. After all, by not connecting the way in which one develops an affect for what is experienced (according to which action is undertaken) and the way in which one can be considered capable of opening oneself up for an experience like this does mean that Deleuze in fact questions the strict rational character that had been scribed to Spinoza before Deleuze. Of course Spinoza mentions rationally (and actually pays a lot of attention to it. But in philosophy it is not about which concepts you mention, but how you give them their content. And if we look at how rationality is conceptualized by Spinoza, this 17th century philosopher all of a sudden has very little in common with fellow Rationalists. Starting with the notion of affect, from the way in which attraction and detraction take place, Spinoza turns out to be radically different from scholars like Kant, who start from the rational subject. Starting with an emphasis on relations, an endless amount of new thought experiments pop up, spaces that would never have been opened if we did not start from the text and –together with Deleuze- searched for the consequences of the difference between affection and affectus.

A second feature of teaching the manifold is that in contrast to linearity and the way this usually shapes the academic environment, creating a manifold of surfaces is never about creating a permanent link between two points. Folding on the one hand is about placing two surfaces into one another, and thus about reading Spinoza into Nietzsche, Leibniz or El Greco. On the other hand the folding is never permanent in that what is folded can also be unfolded or refolded, thus showing us that philosophy is never about searching for an ideal situation in which truth reigns. Philosophy is about thought itself, about the act of thinking. It is about a search and not an outcome. And in line with that, the teacher is not the one informing the students about this ideal (indeed Platonic) situation, a teacher is the one practicing philosophy in the here and now of the classroom.

Creativity: the Art of Teaching

There are still some important things to be said about what Vincennes means for the teacher. After all, we can conclude that practicing naïve philosophy has great consequences for the way the arguments are being approached, and for how the students play their role in the classroom. An important issue in respect to the students was that, because of their heterogeneous backgrounds, teachers cannot expect their students to have prior knowledge. Yet the same argument could be made for the teachers. For as philosophy should happen in the classroom and nowhere else, the teacher too should in some way enter the classroom without

knowing exactly what to say. After all, Lyotards above mentioned critique on false notions of temporality (especially now that such an obvious prefix as pre- is practiced) would be just as much if not even more actual here. Also Deleuze's argument that a class would mutilate when one situation (the preparation) overcomes another. Deleuze does not mean to say that professors should just start their class ad lib, on the contrary, this kind of teaching in the end asks very much from a teacher as he needs to create something in relation to the texts and the students that surround, namely philosophy. But not being open to what happens 'now', is problematic. Teaching is not about repeating what you have learned yourself (in order for students to repeat whatever you as a teacher told them). Teaching has nothing to do with transferring knowledge. It is about the creative construction of arguments; of making people (the teacher and the students) think. Deleuze has summarized this art of teaching as follows: "It [teaching, r.d.]'s like a research laboratory: you give courses on what you're investigating, not on what you know. It takes a lot of preparatory work to get a few minutes of inspiration (1990, p. 139)."

Within these sentences, Deleuze touches the core of what a non-hierarchical teaching didactics, as developed in Vincennes, is about. Or rather, he pictures us what a class can look like when naïve philosophy and teaching the manifold are mastered by both the student and the professor. For then, the classroom becomes a research laboratory, an ongoing experiment in which information is not handed over from teacher to student, but is about creating a space of inspiration, in which the art of affecting and being affected, to involve Spinoza in this argument, is tested in every possible way. This is what Lyotard wants to tell us when he claims that a class is per formative: it is in (naively) creating connections, in searching for new concepts, for new ways of creating meaning to our experiences that thought starts living. Teaching becomes an event, as Badiou images it; a singularity in that it becomes 'something different' from what was already known, the institutionalized knowledge unfolded that vanishes as soon as it appears (Badiou 1993). Resistance, as Lyotard calls it, is therefore not only the content of teaching but just as much the way in which its expression takes place. Teaching, according to Vincennes, is the creative revolution of '68 itself.

Or at least, that is how things were. For also in Vincennes the times are changing. Paris (the intellectual elite and the central government) never changed its idea that Vincennes was ruled by the fouls. And with a patience and a slyness that is mastered only by the administrative machinery, the experimental character of Vincennes has slowly but steadily been put to sleep over the past decades. In 1980 already the campus was moved from the woods of Vincennes to the desolate Parisian suburb of St.Denis. The official reason for this move was by the way that the University was now closer to Paris. The room, in which Deleuze for the past seven years of his career was to give his seminar, was located directly at the highway.

The *Université de Vincennes à Saint-Denis*, as the university was now called, was quite successful in getting more students, but the road now taken was less and less the one originally mapped out by the *Centre universitaire experimental*. The website of Vincennes phrases it differently, or more euphemistically: the emphasis has shifted from the experimental to the intellectual. In the mean time the first generation is placed more and more in some kind of 'hall of fame', and this most of all concerns Deleuze (one of the websites that today publishes Deleuze's

lectures is maintained by people at Vincennes). Of course it is honourable to pay tribute to your precursors. But there is more to it in the case of Vincennes.

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The websites where many classes of Deleuze are being published:
http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/index.html
http://www.univ-paris8.fr/deleuze/article.php3?id_article=1

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